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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5834th meeting of the Security Council, held on 12 February 2008, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Children and armed conflict", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council takes note with appreciation of the 7th report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/757) on Children and armed conflict, and the positive developments, as well as outstanding challenges in the implementation of its resolution 1612 (2005) reflected therein.

"The Security Council, reiterating its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, reaffirms its commitment to address the widespread impact of armed conflict on children, its determination to ensure respect for and the implementation of its resolution 1612 (2005), and all of its previous resolutions on children and armed conflict, as well as respect for other international norms and standards for the protection of children affected by armed conflicts.

"The Security Council stresses, in this regard, the need to adopt a broad strategy of conflict prevention, which addresses the root causes of armed conflict in a comprehensive manner in order to enhance the protection of children on a long-term basis, including by promoting sustainable development, poverty eradication, national reconciliation, good governance, democracy, the rule of law and respect for and protection of human rights.

"The Security Council reiterates the primary responsibility of national Governments in providing effective protection and relief to all children affected by armed conflicts, and encourages further cooperation and coordination between Member States, the United Nations system and the international community, in a spirit of partnership.

"The Security Council reiterates the importance of the full, safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel and goods and the delivery of humanitarian assistance to all children affected by armed conflict, and stresses the importance for all, within the framework of humanitarian assistance, of upholding and respecting the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

"The Security Council calls for the full implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict as called for in paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) in all situations of armed conflict listed in the annexes to the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/757).

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"In this regard the Security Council reiterates that the mechanism should continue to collect and provide timely, objective, accurate and reliable information on violations and abuses committed against children affected by armed conflict and to operate with the participation of and in cooperation with national Governments and relevant United Nations and civil society actors, including at the country level.

"The Security Council commends the work carried out by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for children and armed conflict, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy including her field activities in situations of armed conflicts.

"The Security Council also commends the work carried out by UNICEF and the child protection advisers of peacekeeping operations and political missions in cooperation with other relevant United Nations entities.

"The Security Council welcomes the sustained activity of its Working Group on children and armed conflict, as outlined inter alia in the latest report by its Chair (S/2007/428), and invites it to continue adopting conclusions and proposing effective recommendations for consideration and, where appropriate, implementation by the Council including through mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions.

"The Security Council will continue to consider including or enhancing the presence of child protection advisers in the mandates of all relevant United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions.

"The Security Council strongly emphasizes the need to end impunity for violations and abuses perpetrated against children in armed conflict, and in this regard, welcomes the fact that several individuals who are alleged to have committed such crimes have been brought to justice by national, international and "mixed" criminal courts and tribunals.

"The Security Council acknowledges that the implementation of its resolution 1612 (2005) has already generated progress, resulting in the release and reintegration of children in their families and communities, and in a more systematic dialogue between the United Nations country task forces and parties to the armed conflict on the implementation of time-bound action plans.

"Nonetheless, the Security Council strongly condemns the continuing recruitment and use of children in armed conflict in violation of applicable international law, killing and maiming of children, rape and other sexual violence, abductions, denial of humanitarian access to children and attacks against schools and hospitals by parties to armed conflict.

"The Security Council is concerned with the widespread and systematic use of rape and other forms of sexual violence against children in particular girls in situations of armed conflict, and calls on all parties to armed conflicts to take special measures to protect girls and boys from sexual and gender based violence, particularly rape in situations of armed conflict.

"The Security Council expresses its concern that civilians, particularly children, continue to account for the vast majority of victims of acts of violence committed by parties to armed conflicts, including killing and maiming as a result of deliberate targeting, indiscriminate and excessive use of

force in violation of applicable international law. The Council condemns these acts and demands that those parties immediately put an end to such practices.

"The Security Council is gravely concerned by the persistent disregard of its resolutions on children and armed conflict by parties to armed conflict identified in the reports of the monitoring and reporting mechanism, including parties to whom precise, immediate and unequivocal requests have been addressed. Recalling the Statement S/PRST/2006/48 made by its President on 28 November 2006, the Security Council reaffirms its intention to make use of all the tools provided in its resolution 1612 (2005).

"The Security Council reiterates its call on parties to armed conflict listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/757) that have not already done so to prepare and implement, without further delay, concrete time-bound action plans to halt recruitment and use of children in violation of applicable international law, and to address all violations and abuses against children in close cooperation with the SRSG, as well as with UNICEF and the UN Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting.

"The Security Council expresses concern over the casualties inflicted on children in armed conflict by the indiscriminate use of landmines and cluster munitions, and in this regard, calls upon all parties to armed conflicts to desist from such practice.

"In order to further strengthen the comprehensive framework of the protection of children in armed conflict, considering the changing nature of armed conflicts and the issues raised by the Secretary-General in his report, the Security Council expresses its readiness to review the relevant provisions of its resolutions on children and armed conflict building on the provisions of resolution 1612 (2005), with a view to further increasing the efficiency of its actions.

"The Security Council recognizes that a stronger focus is required on the reintegration and rehabilitation of children associated with armed forces and armed groups, and in this regard invites all parties concerned, including Member States, regional organizations, the Secretariat and other relevant UN entities including UNICEF, UNFPA, UNIFEM, WHO, UNDP, UNHCR, OHCHR, ILO and UNESCO, international financial institutions including the World Bank, as well as civil society, to enhance their exchange of information about programmes and best practices, bearing in mind the relevant provisions of international law, Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict, as well as the 'Paris principles to protect children from unlawful recruitment by armed forces or groups', and ensure that adequate resources and funding are available to support national strategies or action plans in the area of child protection and welfare, and community-based programmes, with a view to ensuring the long-term sustainability and success of their programmatic response to the release, rehabilitation and reintegration of all children associated with armed forces and armed groups.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to submit his next report by May 2009 on the implementation of its resolutions on children and armed conflict."